

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

FEA-02 INT-08 SPC-03 SAM-01 AID-20 NSC-10 RSC-01

CIEP-02 TRSE-00 SS-20 STR-08 OMB-01 CEA-02 SCI-06

NEA-11 COME-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 PA-04 PRS-01 SAI-01 DRC-01 IO-14 OIC-04 EA-11

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O R 071645Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9841

INFO USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BRUSSELS 0808

STATE ALSO FOR T/IEP

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, PINR, BE

SUBJECT: BIO REPORTING FOR ENERGY CONFERENCE

REF: A. STATE 13742 B. BRUSSELS 753

1. REF (B) TRANSMITTED NAMES OF BELGIAN DELEGATION TO WASHINGTON ENERGY CONFERENCE. IN ADDITION TO NAMES PROVIDED, MINFORAFFAIRS SPOKESMAN PAEMEN WILL ACCOMPANY FINFORAFFAIRS VAN ELSLANDE AND AN OFFICIAL FROM MINECONAFFAIRS MAY YET BE ADDED. POSSIBILITY STILL EXISTS THAT FINANCE MINISTER DE CLERCQ WILL ATTEND.

2. CURRENT BIO DATA ARE AVAILABLE IN WASHINGTON ON VAN ELSLANDE, VAN DER MEULEN, DAVIGNON, OCKRENT, ANU DE DOBBELEER. AMBASSADOR LORIDAN IS BETTER KNOWN TO DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS THAN TO EMBASSY, AND WE ASSUME VIGNETTE ON HIM OF TYPE REQUESTED IN REF (A) CAN BEST
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BE PREPARED IN WASHINGTON.FOLLOWING INFORMATION AND COMMENTS

ARE SUBMITTED, TO BE SUPPLEMENTED FROM PREVIOUSLY REPORTED BIO MATERIAL.

3. RENAAT VAN ELSLANDE, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

VAN ELSLANDE IS IN CARETAKER STATUS BUT MAY WELL CONTINUE AS FOREIGN MINISTER IN THE NEXT BELGIAN GOVERNMENT. HE IS PROUD TO BE THE FIRST FLEMISH FOREIGN MINISTER IN THE HISTORY OF BELGIUM. WHEN HE TOOK OFFICE IT WAS CLEAR HE WOULD HAVE PROBLEMS WITH THE POWERFUL PERSONALITY OF POLITICAL DIRECTOR DAVIGNON WITHIN THE FOREIGN MMINISTRY. ALTHOUGH THERE WERE REPORTS OF FRICTION BETWEEN VAN ELSLANDE AND DAVIGNON, IT IS CLEAR THAT DAVIGNON STILL OCCUPIES THE DOMINANT POSITION HE PREVIOUSLY OCCUPIED UNDER SPAAK AND HARMEL. VAN ELSLANDE HAS SHOWN HIMSELF TO BE A STURDY, INDEPENDENT-MINDED INDIVIDUAL. HIS POLICY GOALS IN ATLANTIC AFFAIRS ARE SYMPATHETIC AND COMPATIBLE WITH U.S. GOALS. HE HAS EXPRESSED STRONG DISAPPROVAL OF WHAT HE BELIEVES TO BE A SERIOUS TENDENCY TOWARDS DISINTEGRATION IN THE EC. HIS MINISTRY LOST STATURE WHEN, THIS PAST AUTUMN, TWO SECRETARIES OF STATE POSITIONS WEREREMOVED FROM HIS MINISTRY, AND THE POSITION OF FOREIGN MINISTER WAS NOT GIVEN A PLACEIN THE INNER CABINET ESTABLISHED AT THE TIME. VAN ELSANDE HAS SHOWN NO SPECIAL INTEREST IN THE ENERGY PROBLEM ASIDE FROM POLITICAL RELATIONS WITH THE ARAB PRODUCING COUNTRIES. IN STATEMENTS BEFORE PARLIAMENT AND IN POSITIONS WITHIN THE EC, HE AHS BEEN CAREFUL TO AVOID ITTITATING ARAB SENSITIVITIES. HE WAS OBVIOUSLY DISTRESSED THAT BELGIUM WAS NOT INCLUDED IN THE SECRETARY'S ORIGINAL INVITATION TO THE ENERGY CONFERENCE. THERE IS NO REASON TO BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT HE BEARS ANY GRUDGE. VAN ELSLANDE LUNCHEDED WITH THE SECRETARY IN WASHINGTON THIS PAST AUTUMN. HE TIRES RAPIDLY AND REPORTEDLY FOLLOWS A SPECIAL ALCOHOL-FREE DIET.

4. JOZEF F. M. VAN DER MEULEN, BELGIAN PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

TO THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

VAN DER MEULEN IS A SENIOR BELGIAN DIPLOMAT OF NO GREAT PERSONAL OR PROFESSIONAL PROMINENCE. HE LACKS INFLUENCE IN THE GOB, PROBABLY DUE MAINLY TO DAVIGNON'S PREDOMINANCE IN INTRA-EUROPEAN AFFAIRS. HE IS, HOWEVER, OWING TO LONG YEARS IN HIS CONFIDENTIAL

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POSITION, EXPERT ON ALL ASPECTS OF THE EC.

5. VISCOUNT ETIENNE DAVIGNON, DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR POLITICAL

AFFAIRS, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

DAVIGNON WILL BE KEY MEMBER OF BELGIAN DELEGATION. DAVIGNON'S ATTITUDES, VIEWS, AND PERSONALITY TRAITS HAVE BEEN EXTENSIVELY

REPORTED. SEE BRUSSELS A-306, SEPTEMBER 18, 1973, WHICH DESCRIBES, INTER ALIA, HIS VIEWS OF EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES. HE HAS NO PARTICULAR ECONOMIC EXPERTISE AND SHOWED LITTLE INTEREST IN ENERGY OR RELATED QUESTIONS UNTIL, THE EVENTS OF LATE 1973 RAISED THEM TO A HIGH POLICY LEVEL. ALTHOUGH NORMALLY THESE MATTERS MIGHT BE DEALT WITH BY THE ECONOMIC SIDE OF THE MINISTRY OR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DAVIGNON AND HIS POLITICAL AFFAIRS DIRECTORATE (AS USUAL) ASSUMED RESPONSIBILITY. WE ASSUMED THAT HIS OWN PREDILECTIONS IN THIS AREA WILL BE IN LINE WITH HIS LONG STANDING VIEWS ON INTRA-EUROPEAN AND EUROPEAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS, I.E., EMPHASIS ON THE NEED FOR EUROPE TO HAVE A COMMON POLICY IN PURSUIT OF COMMUNITY INTERESTS BUT TO COOPERATE AND CONSULT CLOSELY WITH THE U.S. IT IS THIS POLITICAL ASPECT OF THE CURRENT ENERGY SITUATION WHICH WILL ENGAGE DAVIGNON'S INTEREST RATHER THAN TECHNICAL ENERGY SUPPLY RELATED MATTERS. HIS VIEWS CAN BE AFFECTED BY THE HIGH LEVEL ATTENTION HE RECEIVES. PREPARATIONS FOR EUROPEAN AND BELGIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE ENERGY CONFERENCE HAVE SHOWN DAVIGNON CONCERNED WITH GAINING THE PRIMARY ROLE IN GOB PARTICIPATION. FOR EXAMPLE, THE GOB'S SENIOR CIVIL SERVANT IN THE ENERGY FIELD, ANDRE BAEYENS--A MAN WHO PLAYS A ROLE IN INTERNAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS SIMILAR TO DAVIGNON'S IN FOREIGN POLICY-- AS WELL AS THE MINISTER OF FINANCE HAVE CLEARLY BEEN VIEWED BY DAVIGNON AS COMPETITORS TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE IF POSSIBLE. INFIGHTING OVER THE COMPOSITION OF THE BELGIAN DELEGATION CONTINUES.

6. ROGER OCKRENT, BELGIAN PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES TO THE OECD

OCKRENT IS A LONG TIME DIPLOMAT AND CIVIL SERVANT, GOING BACK TO MARSHALL PLAN DAYS (PAUL HENRI SPAAK'S CHEF DE CABINET RIGHT AFTER THE WAR, HE WAS NAMED SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE MARSHAL PLAN IN BELGIUM). HE IS DEAN OF THE PERM REPS AT THE OECD AND KNOWLEDGEABLE IN ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, INCLUDING ENERGY. HE HAS SOME INFLUENCE IN

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MINFORAFFAIRS, CERTAINLY MORE THAN VAN DER MEULEN, BUT THIS IS PROBABLY LIMITED TO AREAS RELATED TO HIS OECD EXPERIENCE. HE IS AN ACCOMPLISHED ORATOR, FORCEFUL, AND A STRONG PROPONENT OF OECD AS AN INSTITUTION. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH OBTAIN USMISSION OECD'S COMMENTS ON OCKRENT'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS ENERGY MATTERS.

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INT-08 SPC-03 SAM-01 AID-20 NSC-10 RSC-01 CIEP-02

TRSE-00 SS-20 STR-08 OMB-01 CEA-02 SCI-06 NEA-11

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PRS-01 SAJ-01 DRC-01 IO-14 OIC-04 EA-11 EUR-25 /191 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9842

INFO USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS UNN

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7. THEO DE DOBBELEER, DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS,

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

DE DOBBELEER HAS HAD VERY LITTLE ASSOCIATION WITH THE ENERGY PROBLEM. HIS RELATIONS WITH DAVIGNON ARE NOT CLOSE. DE DOBBELEER IS FRANK, SOMETHING OF A CYNIC, AND POSSESSES RELATIVELY LITTLE IMAGINATION. HE IS, HOWEVER, AN "HONEST" INDIVIDUAL IN THE VERY BEST SENSE OF THE WORD. HE IS STRONGLY CONCERNED THAT THE PRESENT ENERGY SHORTAGE AND OTHER SHORTAGES MIGHT LEAD TO A BREAKDOWN OF LIBERAL TRADE PRACTICES, WHICH HE CONSIDERS VITAL TO BELGIAN INTERESTS. HE IS CONSIDERED TO BE POLITICALLY A SOCIALIST AND WAS QUITE CLOSE TO FAYAT, FLEMISH SOCIALIST, FORMER MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE.

8. PROSPER THYSBAERT, COUNSELOR, CABINET OF THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN

AFFAIRS

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THYSBAERT IS A CAREER BELGIAN DIPLOMAT IN HIS EARLY 40'S. WE HAVE FOUND HIM ONE OF THE ABLER BELGIAN DIPLOMATS OF HIS AGE GROUP. HE HAS, HOWEVER, SPENT LITTLE OF HIS RECENT CAREER ABROAD. ALTHOUGH FLEMISH, HE SEEMS CLOSE TO POLITICAL DIRECTOR DAVIGNON AND IS

PRIVY TO DAVIGNON'S THINKING, PARTICULARLY INsofar AS THE EC IS CONCERNED. HE HAS SHOWN HIMSELF NOTABLY FRIENDLY TO AMERICANS. WHILE NOT USUALLY CONCERNED WITH ENERGY PROBLEMS, HE HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ISSUE IN THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S CABINET SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE MOST RECENT CRISIS. THYSBAERT HAS BEEN DESCRIBED BY ONE SENIOR FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIAL AS THE BEST EC EXPERT IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY (PRESUMABLY MEANING BEST AFTER DAVIGNON). HE SPEAKS ENGLISH WELL.

9. JACQUES VAN YPERSELE, COUNSELOR, CABINET OF THE MINISTER OF

FINANCE

VAN YPERSELE, WHO IS IN HIS EARLY 40'S, WAS SENIOR ADVISOR ON INTERNATIONAL MONETARY AFFAIRS TO CATHOLIC FINANCE MINISTER VLERICK IN THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT AND CONTINUED IN HIS POSITION WITH THE PRESENT LIBERAL FINANCE MINISTER. VAN YPERSELE, WHO COMES FROM PROMINENT NON-TITLED BELGIAN NOBILITY, STUDIED FOR TWO YEARS AT YALE AND SPENT SIX OR SEVEN YEARS WITH THE IMF BEFORE RETURNING TO BELGIUM IN 1970. AFTER A STINT WITH THE EMPAIN HOLDINGS GROUP, HE ASSUMED HIS PRESENT POSITION. BOTH HE AND HIS WIFE ARE FRIENDLY TO AMERICANS AND HAVE PLEASANT MEMORIES OF THEIR YEARS SPENT IN THE UNITED STATES. VAN YPERSELE IS OBVIOUSLY THE MAIN BACKSTOP OF THE FINANCE MINISTER AND PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN MANY OF THE POSITIONS THE MINISTER TAKES. HE HAS A RATHER ACADEMIC KEYNESIAN APPROACH TO INTERNATIONAL MONETARY MATTERS, WHICH HAS SOMETIMES BOTHERED HIS MORE CONSERVATIVE COLLEAGUES IN THE NATIONAL BANK AND THE TREASURY. HE WAS AT THE ROME C-20 MEETING WHEN THE MONETARY SPECTS OF THE ENERGY PROBLEM WERE DISCUSSED, IS FREQUENTLY IN WASHINGTON, AND IS WELL-KNOWN IN THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL COMMUNITY. HE IS PERSONABLE, APPROACHABLE, AMBITIOUS BUT RELIABLE. ATTENTION GIVEN HIM WILL PAY OFF IN COOPERATION.

10. MARCEL FREROTTE, COUNSELOR (MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS),

ATTACHED TO OFFICE OF BELGIAN PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE EC

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WE HAVE NO DIRECT KNOWLEDGE OR BIO DATA ON FREROTTE. WITH CIVIL SERVICE RANK OF COUNSELOR HE IS UPPER MIDDLE GRADE CIVIL SERVANT IN MINECONAFFAIRS DETAILED TO BELGIAN EC PERREP OFFICE. WE ASSUME HE WILL OPERATE AS BACK-UP STAFF TO DELEGATION.
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